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What is claimed is:

In the Claims

Please amend claim 1 as follows:

1. (once amended) A method for [the assay of]assaying N samples each containing a compound to be tested, [which]said method [comprises]comprising[the steps of]:
 - a) providing N populations of carrier beads [where]wherein the carrier beads of each population are distinguishable from the carrier beads of every other population;
 - b) dispensing each distinguishable population of [the]said N populations of [labelled]carrier beads into a separate corresponding one of N different reaction vessels;
 - c) dispensing each one of [the]said N samples into a separate corresponding one of [the]said N different reaction vessels;
 - d) providing in each of said N different reaction vessels reagents for performing an assay whereby a signal moiety is [caused to be]partitioned [in a compound-related manner]between [the]said carrier beads in [that]said N different reaction [vessel]vessels and [a supernatant fluid]the assay medium, indicating at least one of the following: the presence or absence of the

compound to be tested, the concentration of the compound to be tested, and
the biological activity of the compound to be tested;

- e) combining the contents of [all of the]said N different reaction vessels into a mixture, and
- f) subjecting the mixture to analysis by flow cytometry, to assay the signal moiety [associated with]from each of a sequence of individual beads;
wherein N is greater than or equal to 2.

Please amend claim 2 as follows:

- 2. (once amended) [A]The method [as claimed in]of claim 1, wherein [in step a) there are provided N populations]each distinguishable population of carrier beads [where the carrier beads of one population are]is distinguishable by virtue of a detectable label from the carrier beads of another population.

Please amend claim 3 as follows:

- 3. (twice amended) [A]The method [as claimed in]of claim 1, wherein N is 80 – 100,000.

Please amend claim 4 as follows:

4. (twice amended) [A]The method [as claimed in]of claim 2, wherein [in step f) the]said mixture is subjected to analysis by flow cytometry, to assay [the]said signal moiety and [the]said label [associated with]from each of a sequence of individual beads, whereby [the]said signal moiety indicates [the]biological activity of [the]said compound to be tested and [the]said label indicates the sample containing the compound.

Please amend claim 5 as follows:

5. (twice amended) [A]The method [as claimed in]of claim 1, wherein N is from 80 to 4000.

Please amend claim 6 as follows:

6. (twice amended) [A]The method [as claimed in]of claim 1, wherein [the]a reagent, of the reagents recited in step d), is provided on said carrier beads, which are pre-coated with [a]said reagent for performing the assay.

Please amend claim 7 as follows:

7. (twice amended) [A]The method [as claimed in]of claim [1]2, wherein [a population of beads is detectably labelled by means of]said detectable label comprises at least one fluorescent dye.

Please amend claim 8 as follows:

8. (twice amended) [A]The method [as claimed in]of claim [1]2, wherein [a population of beads is electronically labelled]said detectable label comprises an electronic label.

Please amend claim 9 as follows:

9. (twice amended) [A]The method [as claimed in]of claim 1, wherein [the]said signal moiety is a fluorescent dye.

Please amend claim 10 as follows:

10. (twice amended) [A]The method [as claimed in]of claim 1, wherein in step d) the same reagents for performing the same assay are provided in each of the N different reaction vessels.